

Creative Living

Co Abatt editor/644-1100

CLASSIFIED REAL ESTATE



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Restaurateur creates tasty arts benefit

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

In the wake of Gov. John Engler's deep cuts in state arts funding, a Bloomfield Hills restaurateur has unveiled a novel idea to help support cultural jewels like Cranbrook Academy of Art.

Jim Kokas' Opus One, at 565 E. Larned in downtown Detroit's Bricktown, will mix fine dining with entertainment and special exhibits in a bid to raise \$10,000 to \$20,000 weekly for the arts over the next five weeks.

He and his partners also will donate 50 percent of food revenue from a la carte weekday dinners during the five-week drive to a different arts institution.

At least \$10,000 was raised for the arts at the 1100 a person kickoff dinner, "Opus for the Arts," Friday.

Hoping to deepen allegiance to the cultural enrichment provided by the arts, Kokas told 250 dinner-goers, many from the Observer & Eccentric area: "It is up to each of us as individuals and our community as a whole to support the arts in every way possible."

"OPUS FOR the Arts" will benefit:

- Sept. 9-13 — Center for Creative Studies (students will display musical and artistic talents).
- Sept. 16-20 — Detroit Institute of Arts (posters from DIA exhibits will adorn the walls).
- Sept. 23-27 — Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO sounds will fill the restaurant).
- Sept. 30-Oct. 4 — Cranbrook Academy of Art (works by academy artists and students will be displayed).
- Oct. 7-11 — Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT singers will perform opera sets and show tunes).



Roy Slade

said Roy Slade, president of Cranbrook Academy of Art, a Bloomfield Hills graduate school of art, architecture and design founded in 1932 by Eliel Saarinen.

"We plan to come down the Monday of our week with a contingent from the Cranbrook Educational Community Board of Governors, including chairman Pat Hartmann — dutch treat for all."

THIS YEAR, the Academy, which includes a contemporary visual arts museum, drew \$133,800 in state support, 60 percent of its anticipated grant of \$223,000. The \$223,000 represents 10 percent of the Academy budget.

Slade hopes to draw at least \$100,000 next year. "One of our concerns," he said, "is how abrupt the government budget cut was. We had hoped for time to seek alternative sources of funding."

State funding goes into public outreach and education — exhibits, lectures, tours and brochures at the museum and student scholarships at the Academy.

Eight corporate sponsors have agreed to match one-fifth (\$2,000 to \$4,000) of all weekly restaurant donations during "Opus for the Arts." Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Comerica, Coopers & Lybrand, Cross Wrock, Detroit Edison, J. Walter Thompson, Kowalski Sausage and Universal Standard Medical Laboratories.

Calling the arts a community pillar, Slade urged Oakland County businesses to follow the example set by Kokas and partners Ed Mandatara of Sterling Heights, George Blesas of Grosse Ile and Gus Kokas of Dearborn.

OPUS ONE patrons Friday included Ron and Deb Muratore of Farmington Hills. "We're losing a valuable part of our cultural heritage through the arts cuts," Ron said. "I don't feel future generations should have less of that heritage than we have."

He lauded Kokas. "It takes a lot of guts, especially in these economic times, to pledge this kind of financial support."

Christine Strumbo of Bloomfield Hills echoed similar sentiments. "I think perhaps he has focused in on something we're all aware of but perhaps were at odds with what to do about it."

She sees a side benefit to increased private support to the arts: more freedom of expression.

"We just think it's appropriate for private enterprise and individuals to pick up where the public sector leaves off so we'll be able to appreciate and teach the arts in future generations," said Livonia resident Richard Habesh, attending with his wife, Judith.

Ideas taking shape

Southfield display focuses on form



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

"Outdoor carving" by William Stone is of limestone. This artist, who lives near Grand Rapids, grew up in Lathrup Village.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

This whimsical 7-foot, brightly painted steel figure is one of a group of four by Dale John Wedg.

Michigan Outdoor Sculpture III, an exhibition of works by 20 Michigan artists on the grounds of the Southfield Civic Center, again draws attention to quality of art being produced in this state.

Perhaps the strongest statement this event makes is what can be achieved through cooperative efforts of business, government and the fine arts community.

Louis Redstone, artist/architect and co-chairman of the exhibition committee with Michael Curtis, said it was organized to "encourage business support and participation in the arts, stimulate the cultural environment in Michigan and enhance public awareness and appreciation for outdoor sculpture by acclaimed Michigan artists."

The \$1,000 Arts Foundation of Michigan award went to Dora Natella for her bronze, "La Nacita" (birth). The \$500 award from the Business Consortium for the Arts was given to William Mayer for

"Bell Weather," a 12 foot high work of painted and natural aluminum. An honorable mention was given to David Newton for "Anoa," a figurative work in cement.

Other works in the show were by Herb Babcock, Robert Bielal, James Born, Joseph DeLauro, Norma Penchansky-Glasser, Al Herbert, Matthew Holland, Nancy Leiserowitz, Sue Linburg, James Oxford, Thomas Palazzolo, John Plet, William Stone, Pamela Stump, Dale Wedg and Marsha Wood.

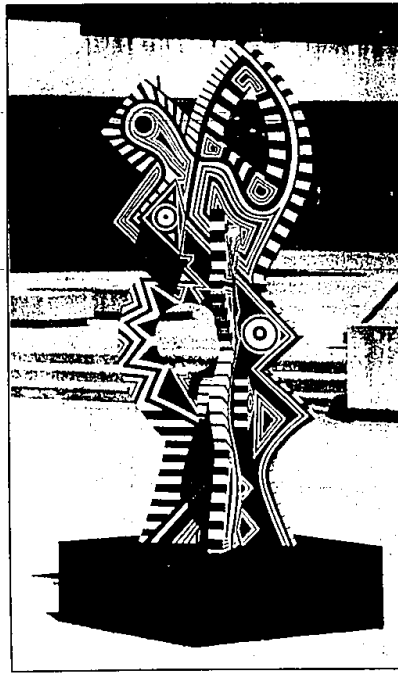
The exhibition continues through October. It is open free of charge. The Southfield Civic Center is at Evergreen and 10½ Mile, Southfield.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

"Jete," of bronze and stone, 5 by 3 by 2 feet, by Norma Penchansky Glasser, is one of several figurative works in the exhibition.

The free exhibit continues through October at the Southfield Civic Center.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

"Totem Form" by Thomas Palazzolo, a 10-foot high mixed media work, is the centerpiece of the exhibition.

Birmingham house tour Sunday offers special chance to see unusual designs, Page 3D

'Fascinatin' Rhythm' opens pops season

Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra opens the new season with the first of three pops concerts at 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, at Temple Beth El, 14 Mile and Telegraph, Bloomfield Township.

Guest conductor Charles Greenwell will conduct the opener, "Fascinatin' Rhythm," featuring music by George Gershwin. Greenwell is music director for WQRS-FM radio.

"Invitation to the Dance" is scheduled for 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 23, and "Just for Fun," will be at 8 p.m. Thursday, April 2.

The three-concert classical season begins with "Russian Spectacular" at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 20, with guest soloist Linda Snedden-Smith. "Detroit Opera Legends" at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23, will feature Glenda Kirkland, Shirley Love, George Shirley and Ara Berberian performing favorite opera overtures, arias and ensembles.

Season tickets for both the classical and the pops series are available at special rates. Individual concert tickets are also available.

Pianist Leszek Barkiewicz will be the guest artist for the concert at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, May 17, "Eastern European Freedom."

Felix Resnick, conductor and music director for the BBSO, will conduct the classical concerts. This is his 17th season with this orchestra. Season tickets for either or both classical and pops series tickets are still available at special rates. And individual concert tickets are also available. For information, call 645-BBSO.

New editor takes helm of Creative Living

See "Point of views" page for Co Abatt's reminiscences

Longtime Oakland County Creative Living editor Corinne Abatt will retire from the Observer & Eccentric Friday after 21 years of award-winning professionalism in a variety of reporting and editing roles.

Mary Klemic, a newspaperwoman for 11 years and the O&E's Journalist of the Year in 1988, will succeed Abatt, assistant managing editor Bob Sklar announced Sept. 6.

Abatt is looking ahead to freelance writing ("for whatever publications I can sell stories to"), penning more short stories ("for fun since I haven't had any published yet"), a Schoolcraft College classroom ("where I'll teach feature writing for the fall semester") and enjoying her family ("my three children and one grandson").

"I've known Co for most of her years at the O&E. And I've always admired her spirit for the job and tenacity for the story," Sklar said. "She paints wonderfully rich word portraits on the arts beat and she'll leave behind a legacy as a masterful chronicler of the arts."



Corinne Abatt
'an inspiration'

"Co has been an inspiration to co-workers, readers and arts devotees alike," Sklar added. "We're poorer for her calling it quits but the richer for her legacy of distinctive journalism."

MANAGING EDITOR Steve Barnaby also lauded Abatt's years of service.



Mary Klemic
'unbridled enthusiasm'

"Anyone who has ever worked with Co is touched by her enthusiasm. She is a journalist in the best tradition. She served the public well. She was one of the first persons I met when I came here nearly 20 years ago. We all will miss her," he said.

Klemic, 34, earned a bachelor of arts degree in mass communica-

tions from Wayne State University. She did a college internship at the O&E in 1979, then spent three years reporting for the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Times-Herald.

She joined the O&E staff in 1982. She wrote for many sections, including Creative Living, before becoming a copy desk editor in 1987.

Klemic is an avid reader and an arts enthusiast. She plays the piano and guitar and is studying violin.

"She'll bring new ideas, unbridled enthusiasm and an easy-to-read writing style to the Creative Living beat," Sklar said.

"I'm looking forward to sharing my love and appreciation for the arts with our readers and to share their perspectives on the arts with one another," Klemic said.

"Oakland County has a lot to offer from art followers as well as artists. Creative lifestyles are vital and exciting in a community."

ABATT, a three-time Journalist of the Year nominee, won a 1990 Governor's Arts Award, which salutes excellence and leadership in the arts.

The Beverly Hills resident has been Creative Living editor in Oakland County since 1975.

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